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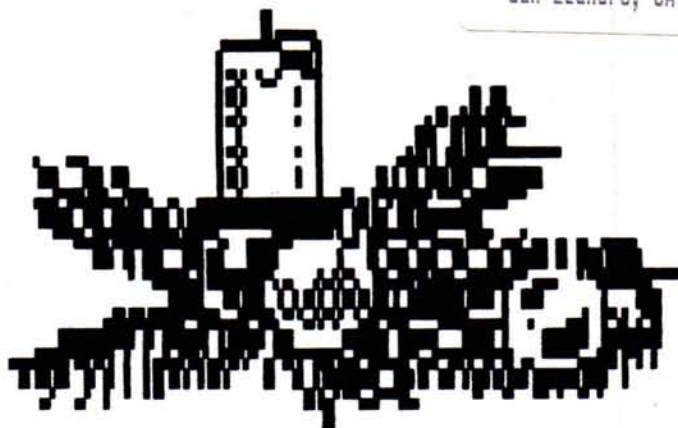
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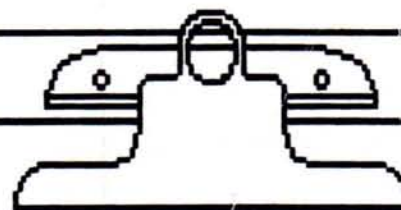
DECEMBER 1987



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Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
		1	2 DCSig Meeting	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12 Business Meeting
13	14	15	16 Officers Meeting	17	18	19
20	21	22	23 ASTRO Sig	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

ATARI EXCHANGE OF LOUISVILLE



This Month's Features

Articles:

Fall 87' ComdexReport
Disk Librarian on SynFile
SpartaDos Subdirectories

Software Reviews:

Jingledisk
MaxPak
Sierra On-line Interactive Adventures



AELien TRANSMISSIONS

The Information Exchange Newsletter of the Atari Exchange of Louisville

Business Meeting Minutes

by Jack Link

The November business meeting got off to a late start because the meeting room had been captured by a group of EMTs taking their final exams. In the absence of our president Don Garr, the meeting was called to order by Lloyd Bromwell at 12:00. Since the topic of the month was SpartaDos, Lloyd allowed Gary Brockie to begin his presentation.

Gary covered many of the special features of SpartaDos which is no doubt the most comprehensive DOS available for the 8-bit Atari computers. While having the capabilities of being MS-DOS like, it also includes a menu utility that allows the ease of DOS 2.0 if desired. This DOS is adaptable to ANY drive configuration presently available.

There were rumors that the XEP80 80 column adapter for the XL/XE computers has been shelved. According to Duvall Bruce, Far Out Music in southern Indiana is considering becoming an Atari dealer. I hope to find out more about this development at the ASTRO meeting.

The club library has received all the 8-bit titles voted on at past meetings.

Due to conflicts with his work schedule, it is necessary for Jody Estes to relinquish his position as Secretary. As specified in the constitution, the President can appoint any willing member to fill the empty position. Yours truly shamelessly nominated Louis Kuhl to be the new Secretary. Because Louis was gagged and tied, it was impossible for him to refuse. Thanks Louis for joining with us, I'm sure you will do

a fine job.

Well, that's about all I can remember since I was sitting in the back of the room, defending us from any attacking EMTs. See you at the next business meeting on December 12th.

PRESS RELEASE:

OVERVIEW OF COMDEX 1987 ATARI BOOTH
From GENIE 11/2/87

CONNECTIVITY, SOLUTIONS and TECHNOLOGY:
ATARI ANNOUNCES NEW PRODUCTS AT COMDEX

(Las Vegas, NV -- Comdex Fall 87)... In a series of major product introductions, Atari Corporation emerges as a maker of a complete line of high-performance, low-cost solutions for the business world.

New technology is showcased by *Abaq*, an ultra-high-performance workstation with blazing speed and dazzling graphics. The *Abaq*, based on a sophisticated "transputer" chip, runs more than 10 times faster than a PC/AT technology and more than 5 times faster than the 68020 with math processor. The parallel processing capability of *Abaq* lets a single system multiply its processing power by adding extra transputer chips.

Atari unveiled its new CD player capable of reading CD-ROM disks and of playing musical CD disks. The CD-ROM is supported by a Mega and ST-compatible DMA interface, and will retail in early 1988 for under \$600.

Atari's connectivity answer is a LAN which is compatible with the NETBIOS standard used by IBM and Novell. It communicates data at 1 megabits per second to PC's and over 250K bits-per-

If you select SKIP then you're asked if you'd like to enter a file name instead. For instance, if you read the disk directory from DATA FINANCE you'd get about 35 file names in the listing. Instead of adding all these data files to your disk library you could SKIP the listing, answer Yes to the question "Y/N to enter filename instead?" and type in Data Finance. The directory listing you had is dropped and the file name Data Finance is recorded.

If you select PRINT then a disk label will be printed for your disk. I wrote this program using my Citech Prowriter but there's only three codes in one program line and would be very easy to change for use with other printers.

Now that you have saved a DIF file with the READDISK program, Syn-File can load the data by using it's conversion option "DIF to SYNFILE". Since SynFile has no idea what you want to name the fields in your new data base it automatically assumes the field names A, B, C, etc... File name = A, Sector size = B and Disk label = C. When the conversion is completed you can modify the database and change the filenames. Then open the data base, choose an index and you're ready to go.

If you already have a disk library on SynFile you can add to it by merging data bases. Remember when merging data bases in SynFile to use small indexes or you may run out of memory. Both database indexes are loaded simultaneously for the merge, and it's easy to exceed available memory if your indexes are on too many characters.

The quantity of program names you can read and save in one DIF file is limited due to the design concept of writing a DIF file. You see, the very beginning of the file states how many records are in the file. Since this has to be known before writing everything has to be in memory before the DIF file can be started. All the disk directories are stored in memory and when you're done, or the strings I allocated become full, then the DIF file is written. So the amount of programs you can inventory in one batch are limited by memory. Besides Lloyd and I had a little trouble with SynFile converting the Public Domain library when the DIF file was too large. So I

recommend keeping the size down to a couple of hundred file names per DIF file. Once you've read all your disk's and saved DIF files they can all be merged together in SynFile for the result of one large disk library data base. Happy computing.

JINGLEDISK

Hi Tech Expressions, Inc.
2699 South Bayshore Drive
Suite 1000A
Coconut Grove, FL 33133
305/854-2318 1-800-848-9273
by Lawrence R. Estep

The holiday season is once again quickly approaching, and while decorating and preparing for Christmas, why leave your computer out? Jingledisk by Hi Tech Expressions is a fantastic program for the Atari 8-bits! This program allows you to print full page graphics, or folded cards with your own personalized greeting inside.

After all of the cards have been made, and the decorating is done, you can sit back and watch a wonderful graphics display full of yuletide cheer and excitement. This program is just one of the many fine budget-priced programs from Hi Tech. This program retails for around \$9.95 and supports the following printers: Atari XMM801, Epson LX80, MX80 & MX100, Okidata 192/193, 92/93, Panasonic 1090/1091, Star Gemini SG-10 and Gemini 10X.

There is also a Holiday Paper Pack available to print your cards on. This Pack includes 150 sheets of paper in 3 different holiday designs, and 24 stickers in 4 different designs. This piece of software can be ordered direct from Hi Tech at 1-800-848-9273 or from most mail order companies.

Let's show our support for Hi Tech by purchasing this fine piece of software!

Happy Holidays
Lawrence Estep



ectory) followed by the directory name.

DIR shows us that we're still on SUBSDISK, but now we're inside the SUB_1 directory. Let's make things more interesting and create another subdirectory in this directory...

```
D1:CREDIR SUBSUB_1
```

```
D1:CWD SUBSUB_1
```

```
D1:DIR
```

```
Volume: SUBSDISK Directory: SUBSUB_1
```

```
657 FREE SECTORS
```

We're now in subdirectory SUBSUB_1 that's in subdirectory SUB_1, that's a subdirectory of MAIN. Confusing, isn't it? This directory is pretty barren too, so let's make things a little more interesting by copying some files from drive #2...

```
D1:COPY D2:*.DOS D1:
D2:X32D.DOS
D2:XC23E.DOS
D2:XD23E.DOS
```

Ok, now lets go up one level and see what a directory with files in it looks like from the outside...

```
D1:CWD <
```

We just used the CWD command again but this time instead of using a directory name, I did what's known as a relative move. The '<' means 'go up one directory from where you are. In this case that puts us back in SUB_1. Let's take a look...

```
D1:DIR
```

```
Volume: SUBSDISK Directory: SUB_1
```

```
SUBSUB_1 <DIR> 10-07-85 4:24p
517 FREE SECTORS
```

From the directory listing, you can see that the files we moved into SUBSUB_1 are not listed. Only the subdirectory's name is displayed.

While we're here, let's get some more files from drive #2...

```
D1:COPY D2:RD*.* D1:
D2:RD.COM
D2:RD260.COM
D2:RDBASIC.COM
```

Also, lets create another directory while we're at it...

```
D1:CREDIR SUBSUB_2
```

And make sure that everything happened the way we wanted...

```
D1:DIR
```

```
Volume: SUBSDISK Directory: SUB_1
```

```
SUBSUB_1 <DIR> 10-07-85 4:24p
RD COM 1585 1-15-86 4:25p
RD260 COM 924 9-03-85 11:23a
RDBASIC COM 760 3-10-85 11:21a
SUBSUB_2 <DIR> 10-07-85 4:31p
498 FREE SECTORS
```

There's our new subdirectory plus the files we moved over from disk #2. As long as everything's going so well, let's move into the new directory and copy some more files...

```
D1:CWD SUBSUB_2
```

```
D1:DIR
```

```
Volume: SUBSDISK Directory: SUBSUB_2
```

```
498 FREE SECTORS
```

```
D1:COPY D2:SPRINT*.*
D2:SPRINT.COM
D2:SPRINT.DOC
```

And now that that's done I'm going to take you on another relative move. Notice that there are two left angle brackets in this command. That means we are going up two levels and so should end up in the 'MAIN' directory.

```
D1:CWD <<
```

```
D1:DIR
```

```
Volume: SUBSDISK Directory: MAIN
```

```
X32D DOS: 12890 10-07-85 4:19p
SUB_1 <DIR> 10-07-85 4:21p
490 FREE SECTORS
```

We are now in the outermost directory. All the files in the lower directories and even the lower directories themselves are hidden from us. This really keeps the file listings short and sweet.

If you have been watching closely you will have noticed that the number of free sectors has been dropping. In

So far I've only demonstrated the relative mode of changing directories. There is another way called the Direct mode. Before we get into that let me try to clarify what I have been doing.

As mentioned before, the angle brackets denote a direction through the subdirectories. A '<' generally means up (or out) one directory. A '>' means down (or in) one directory. 'DIR <SUB_1' would tell DOS to look for 'SUB_1' in the directory just above the current directory. 'DIR <SUB_1>' tells DOS to look into the SUB_1 directory and 'DIR <SUB_1>SUBSUB_1' tells DOS to look into the directory of SUBSUB_1 that's found in the directory SUB_1.

The direct mode is sometimes easier to use as it always starts in the uppermost directory. Using this command mode you are telling DOS to go directly to the 'MAIN' menu and proceed from there. Let's demonstrate by changing directories using this mode. But first I'll move all the files in this directory into the target directory using the direct mode...

```
D1: COPY *.* D1:>SUB_1>SUBSUB_2>
D1: PORT.COM
D1: P_4800.RC
D1: PUTRUN.COM
```

...o.k., here we go...

```
D1: CWD D1:>SUB_1>SUBSUB_2>
```

...now let's see that everything made it here safely, including us...

```
D1: DIR
```

```
Volume: SUBSDISK Directory: SUBSUB_2
```

```
SPRINT COM 756 1-16-86 4:12p
SPRINT DOC 546 1-30-86 8:37p
PORT COM 1 2-13-85 12:05p
P_4800 RC 2 10-10-84 10:13a
PUTRUN COM 589 4-06-85 3:45p
473 FREE SECTORS
```

Notice the difference in the command. All we had to do was start with a 'D1:>'. This tells DOS that we want to start at the beginning. Alternately, we could have dropped the 'D1:' and said '>SUB_1>SUBSUB_2>' and we would have done the same thing since DOS will assume the 'D1:'.

We'll test this out by returning to

the outermost menu...

```
D1: CWD >
```

```
D1: DIR
```

```
Volume: SUBSDISK Directory: MAIN
```

```
X32D DOS 12890 10-07-85 4:19p
SUB_1 <DIR> 10-07-85 4:21p
SUB_2 <DIR> 10-07-85 4:34p
473 FREE SECTORS
```

...now we're at the outermost directory again.

AS long as we're out here and we have already copied all the files in SUB_2 into SUBSUB_2, we might as well get rid of SUB_2. The command to delete a directory is 'DELDIR' and it's used like CREDIR, with the name of the directory to be deleted...

```
D1: DELDIR SUB_2
```

Can't delete file

I forgot that SpartaDOS won't let you delete a directory with files in it. First we have to clear all the files out of SUB_2.

```
D1: ERASE D1:>SUB_2>*. *
```

```
D1: DIR SUB_2>
```

```
Volume: SUBSDISK Directory: SUB_2
```

```
480 FREE SECTORS
```

Now our command should work...

```
D1: DELDIR SUB_2
```

```
D1: DIR
```

```
Volume: SUBSDISK Directory: MAIN
```

```
X32D DOS 12890 10-07-85 4:19p
SUB_1 <DIR> 10-07-85 4:21p
482 FREE SECTORS
```

... and the directory listing shows that to be the case.

That's the end of our tour for now. We've covered the use of DIR, for listing directories, CREDIR and DELDIR to make and remove them, and CWD and the different modes of moving between directories. Besides all that we taken a look at the general directory

the printing, reprint the last file, or choose to print text or graphics.

MaxPak allows you to set up macros that will make easier multi-key commands. This is done by defining a special "hot" key that MaxPak recognizes. At the moment, only <ALT>, <CONTROL>, <L SHIFT>, and <R SHIFT> are recognized, which means that some programs will have problems using this feature.

I like MaxPak. It does things that are useful and being a desk accessory, can be called at any time from a GEM application. You can use it from a non-GEM program but it is limited in that the program must meet certain limits. All of the features mentioned only use 1 desk slot but it does use a lot of RAM. I tend to use it by itself at the moment, but if you have at least 1meg of RAM, then I highly recommend that you get MaxPak.

SIBERRA ON-LINE FOR THE ST

Great Games for the Thinking Man
by Louis Kuhl

If you haven't yet tried your hand at one of the 3-D Interactive games being produced for the ST by a bunch of real clever people at Sierra On-Line, then you may be missing some very satisfying leisure hours at the computer. Let me tell you about my experiences with several of their games.

For those of you who are totally unfamiliar with the games, a few words of introduction are in order.

Interactive role playing games consist of a story line which is loaded into your computer. There is a beginning to the story and an ending. What happens in between is determined by you, the "role" player. You are the "hero" of the story and you control how the story develops by what you type into the computer. The computer will describe, sometimes via text and sometimes via both text and picture, where you are and what special conditions may exist that affect what you might decide to do.

Your choice of actions is usually rather limited. If there is a pleasant stream to the South, you may want to type "South". If there happens to be a cool dark forest to the North, you may or may not want to check it out by typing "go North" (or simply "North", the computer will understand). If you see a gold ring near

the stream to the south, type "take ring". If you should find a broken arrow in the dark forest, you may want to "look at broken arrow". Get the idea?



From there on the main object is to explore thoroughly every area of your domain (and it can be extensive!), find every object that may be off value, solve all problems that arise and too, as best you can, accomplish your mission. Other than that, there isn't much to the games...unless you want to count the possibility that you might fall into that pleasant little stream and drown or that you may encounter all sorts of ghoulish monsters in that cool dark forest! This type of game has been around for a long time and is quite popular among those who take a lot of pride in solving puzzles. I had tried my hand at several on the 8 bit, but could never really get into all that reading of text and keeping detailed notes of important feature of each area. Too much like work to for me.

Now comes Sierra and their 3-D "action" games. There is very little text. Everything you need to know about an area (scene), is right there before your eyes. Your "hero" is a little animated character with moving arms and legs. If you want him to go toward that pleasant little stream, you simply point him in that direction via the keypad arrows or a "good ol' joystick". Should you decide to pick up that gold ring by the waters edge, simply maneuver your character to a position near it, then you must type in "take ring". If you're not near enough, the computer will tell you so. If you forget to take your hands out of your pockets before trying to pick up the ring, the computer will ask how you can do that. That's your clue that you have overlooked something that must be done first. Are you catching on as to how things work?

But look out! You may still fall in the water and be eaten by a big fish.

Furthermore, if there are any evil beings in that dark forest you just entered, the computer will not have to tell you about it. You'll see the hideous beast leap from